You Will Always Have Me

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You Will Always Have Me

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Summary

Hannibal and Will aren't human. They are Wendigo

Hannibal has always known he wasn't because he had his sister to figure it out with.

Will was abopted so doesn't know and his being raised by humans had him mimicing and believeing he was one growin up.

Their specices have true mates.

Upon first meeting him Hannibal knows Will is his true mate

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Hannibal remembers his birth.

He knows for humans that must be a insane thing to contemplate and experience. Hannibal doesn't find it to be much of a big deal. Given his kind were born of eggs it wasn't much more then remembering being surrounded by fluid and darkness until he had strength enough to push against that darkness until it gave way to the light outside of it. Now, if he was human or a mammal of some kind he imagines that process would have been much more traumatic to witness. It certain was to learn about when he first started in medical studies.

He was lucky to have been born of a species that had no such problems. He will say there was the disadvantage of being born alone. Having to face to world suddenly with no conception of where, what, or who he even was. Suddenly breaking free of his wonderful peace shell and being assaulted by the light for the very first time. Not too bad in the dim and dank cave his egg was in but still an assault to the sense.

It would only be after a laborious moment of feeling his lungs orientate to air suddenly and collecting himself after the first use of his senses was he able to see to his right an equally large egg next to his. Having the sense and mental presence enough to see it was different from the rocks around him and very similar to the thing he himself came out of. He wouldn't be able to later conceptualize the idea of 'siblings' until well into the years he developed a concept of language. For that moment Hannibal could only experience for the first time the idea of 'sameness'.

He'd been very curious about the thing and spent a while just looking touching and tapping against it occasionally. Considering smashing against it like he'd done his own egg from the inside, wondering what he'd find if he did. Only deciding against it as he knew breaking through the egg was jarring enough when you did it yourself and not someone else.

While interesting the egg didn't hold his attention forever, eventually the much more present gnawing at his stomach drew his attention. He'd curled in on himself after while when the gnawing became painful. Noticing the only other then in the cave that gave off an alluring smell. He sat next to what he'd later realize was a pile of dead fox. Letting the smell fill his nose and attempting to get rid of the gnawing pain from that alone.

Eventually touching one and stabbing his nails into it's dead flesh. Lifting the craws to closer to his nose to smell, hoping to ease his pain in doing so. The blood dripped off the crawls as he inhaled more and a drop fell onto his lips and razor sharp teeth. Tipping back onto his toungue making an involuntary grumble of satisfaction leave him. He immediate licked his finger to feel that satisfaction again. Once they were clean he just stabbed into the flesh again and did the same.

Licking the fall blood off the floor and barely managing to sate that hunger but certainly feeling the pain go away from each lick. Eventually there was no more to lick up or stab out so Hannibal went straight for the source and stabbed his teeth into the flesh. Shocking himself with their sharpness and the hunk of meat he took he pulled back. Having only planned to suck out the blood, instead he ended up swallowing the chunk whole. His stomach

finally settling at the bite and a deep rumble of satisfaction stronger than ever before coming from him.

That was the first time Hannibal learned to eat. Never realizing how much the taste of flesh would later rule over almost everything he'd ever do. He indulge after that. Diving into the pile of dead animals left for him by what he later contemplated must have been his absent parents.

Devouring with vigor until the hunger pains turned to stuffing pains. Stopping only when his stomach could fit no more. Even then, still gnawing at some bones from the pure flavor and contemplating how long he had to wait until he could try for more flesh again without hurting.

That's how Hannibal spent his first day of life eating and wallowing happily on a cave round next to something he could only assume to be an egg. That would be his routine for the next three days until the egg he laid next to started to move as well. Hannibal watching it with intent fascination as it went from the occasional shake to strong rock that gave way to a hole on the side of the egg. The most interesting thing he ever saw in his short life.

He watched as a slimy, small, and wiggle creator the same size as him came out. Only able to assume that they looked alike based on what he could see from his own hands. He watched her react much the same he did to being born. Overwhelmed and hiding from the light and sounds but not necessarily in pain. Ignoring him fully as she collected her self and adjusted to the world around her. Quickly coming around and focusing on him first once she was settled. Laying flat on her belly in the cave facing him and seemingly watching to see what he'd do. Hannibal did the same as her and they spent a long while just staring and blinking at the only other living creature around them unaware of how one should interact with another sentient being.

Eventually she seemed to get uncomfortable as time pasted and Hannibal just titled his head in fascination at that. Watching as her face twitched and occasionally. Unaware of what was going on until the loud grumble from her stomach was heard and Hannibal blinked in understanding. He looked form her over to the pile of dead animals and then back at her waiting for her to go for it, but unlike him she seemed to not have the same curiousness for it as he did or notice the way the smell drew one in.

So, for whatever reason Hannibal couldn't tell he got up and grabbed two of the foxes while she watched with her own head tilted and growing in volume stomach. He moved back to his place but sitting up now and took a bite from the flesh. Showing with his mouth open as best he could while he chewed and swallowed. Her eyes wide in fascination as he did. Hannibal then moved over and nuzzled the other fox to her. She looked at it and then him again but didn't move. So Hannibal ate another piece in front of her. Trying to show her what she was supposed ot do with it.

When she titled her head again and just watched Hannibal moved over to her and let her eyes follow him as he leaned over and took the fox back. Biting a small piece off but not swallowing. Instead taking it out his mouth and nudging her probing sharp teeth and lips with it. She let him do it. Not reacting until the blood from the animal touched her tongue. Her eyes widening and a rumble of pleasure leaving her. She opened her mouth and watched him

expectantly as he dropped the meat in her mouth. She close closed her mouth around it and seemed to just suck on it for a while. Rumbling pleased and rumbling louder when her sucking finally tripped her swallowing reflex and shed downed the meat.

Hannibal instinctively rumbled pleased with her as she took the rest of the fox and joined him in his meal. They both spent the day like that. Staring at one another and eating. They spent the next day like that too, then the next, and the one after that as well.

Spending the moment they weren't eating looking, exploring, and touching one another. Fascinated by the other. They figured very quickly that first night they enjoyed sleeping on top of one another. Sharing warmth in the cold nights and cuddling close. Even if Hannibal did think her slimy body was sticky to lay on and hard to get off in the morning he was glad they both lost that sliminess after the first night. Properly dried out for a more comfortable rest.

Eventually they were out of fox. Splitting the last one between the two of them. Not wanting the other to miss out on eating. That left with them with no more food in their little cave and the first motivation to leave it sense hatching. Hannibal had been reluctant, weary of the noises he'd heard form beyond the cave but his sister was not. The more curious of the two of them and clearly less cautious she'd stood, something they learned to do together on their second day, and walked right out of the cave. Coming right back when the assault of the sun was too much for her sensitive nocturnal eyes.

She waited until she was dark and her hungry stomach pressured her to try again. This time baring the light much better and even joying the change of scenery. Taken with all she saw around her she'd never experienced before. Rumbling loudly and looking back at Hannibal multiple times and often wanting to run out and explore but unwilling to leave her companion behind. Hannibal let her excitement get to her and joined her.

That had been a wonderful first night into the world exploring all their little corner of the forest had to offer, but never straying too far from their little cave. The only home they had ever known, and more importantly known to be safe.

What Hannibal will never forget from that night was the first time they saw living animals. A fox hunting a rabbit funny enough. The two watching in fascination as they never saw the thing they understood to be food *moving* . They hadn't even though tit possible. They followed and watched the thing all night long. Their presences either not noticed or being ignored as they weren't perceived as a threat.

It was Hannibal who went for it first. Hungry and seeing the thing he knew as food, moving or not he wanted to eat it and it's movement didn't deter him. He found it very hard to catch though. Realizing quickly it was not as okay with being eaten as Hannibal was with eating it.

When they realized this Hannibal and his sister had to work together for what felt like hours but was probably just one to get it in their jaws and not escaping. Both taking a side of it and ripping it together so that it *finally* stopped moving. That made it much easier to finish their meal. They ate the rabbit to just to see how it tasted and were not disappointed. That was the first time they ever hunted together.

It was a great day.

Hannibal and his sister quickly got into a rhythm after that. Having a better idea of what it meant to be alive. Something more then just sitting in their cave and waiting for something to just come to them to eat. They developed a love for hunting, especially when they did it together. Quickly becoming a dominate team of hunters in the area. There was nothing they ran into they couldn't eventually kill and eat together. It was the highlight of their day to go out and hunt. They didn't even wait until they were hungry anymore to do it. Enjoying finding something new to hunt together just as much as the actual hunt itself.

Hunting wasn't the only thing they did however. They also enjoyed watching. Observing other animals and how they lived their lives. When their bellies were full and a healthy reserve of meat was in their cave they spent more and more time just watching. Seeing the things they ate were not much different from themselves.

Seeing the birth, lives, and their deaths by all manners and means. Coming to understanding of what they were to each other. How they were like the other groups of animals that were born together, siblings. Still having no language of their own to say an conceptualize any of this they never spoke to one another past hungry or pleased rumbles but they could see the spark of understanding and intelligence in each others eyes often and understood the other was just as intelligent as themselves.

They learned how to show and appreciate affection from watching as well. Having no out lit before or ways to express that feeling for the other until they saw other. Cuddling more simply because, play fighting and nudging quickly being added to their physical behavior. Hannibal and his sister learned a grew and developed their own nature by watching the whole of the forest around them.

This is also how they soon realized they were lacking in life. Most of all the animals they ever saw had bigger animals like themselves around. Animals that laid their eggs or birth them. Ones that stuck around and made sure they survived. Risking their own lives and livelihoods to keep them fed and happy. Protecting them and taking care of them. Teaching them to do the same. Hannibal and his sister began to wonder where their big version were.

Parents.

That's the word for it Hannibal would later learn. He and his sister would search for some for a while before inevitably giving up when they realized they did well enough off on their own with just each other and seeing other animals that seem to do the same and leave their offspring behind to fend for itself. They simply came ot the conclusion that was just how their kind was supposed to be. Besides clearly their parents cared to some extent to have left them so much food when they were born. They now realized how hard getting so much meat must have been and saw it as a great farewell gift from their parents. It was enough for them. They could figure out the rest together.

Still, they couldn't help the wondering sometimes. Maybe they were supposed to have someone to teach them and their own parents abandon that mission or worse they weren't able to. Maybe something bigger and stronger than them stopped them doing it. Hannibal and

his sister had done that to many other animals and while they hadn't met anything stronger then themselves yet that doesn't mean it's not out there.

These thoughts made them more cautious and at one point made Mischa paranoid. Hannibal's sister getting very mad at him when he'd gone off for half a day without bringing her. Panicked pacing and angry rumbles that didn't convey properly how upset she was he left without even waiting for her to wake. Hannibal hadn't meant to be gone so long so was apologetic. Only able to show it with bringing her meat and nudging her side. Even when she snapped at him. Threatening him much more seriously than when they play fought.

That was their first real fight. They got over it quickly and moved on. Being sure not to leave the other one alone without notice anymore and rarely were they gone so long from each other. Only when circumstances were out their hands.

They spent their days growing and doing what they could to get to be better hunters. Amazed at how they both sprouted up in size and grew more appendages. Hannibal developing large and buck like horns on his head and becoming broader and taller than his sister. Becoming stronger than her as well. Mischa growing more slimmer horns and getting lithe in her body, except her chest which developed what Hannibal considered at the time weird small lumps. She also became much faster then Hannibal and could easily out pace and lap him. Her endurance was also better but Hannibal's ability to take damage was better then hers as they found out when they both fell off a cliff during a race and Mischa had clearly experienced more pain then him.

It was so weird to find themselves changing so much from one another as they grew and they often picked and probed at the other when they noticed something different. Pestering and drawing attention to it until the other noticed. Both of them obsessed with understanding themselves and their bodies as much as possible. Still having found no other like themselves they were their own greatest mystery.

They would learn and solve more about themselves as they got older. One thing in particular that Mischa was the first to figure out was what Hannibal liked to call in his head 'mimicry'. They were out hunting one day and had seen as a young fawn drift from the pack, they had just about to go for it when it seemed to reorientate itself and make it's way back to it's heard. Panicked to get it with drawing attention to themselves Mischa went to call out for it much like she's done to Hannibal to get his attention in the past. Only this time it was not the typical and single sound of rumbling they usually produced but instead a perfect call that copied to fawns mother.

It drew her attention immediately to the bushes they hid behind as well as Hannibal's. Who looked at his sister in shock. She also seemed stunned at the sound she'd made and only hesitate for a second before doing it again. Attracting the fawns attention as the small animal got more and more confident it was heading towards safety. The kill was quick and painless when it eventually was in range. They dragged it away to their home without having ever drawing the attention of the heard.

That day was a break through in their hunting ability. Both of them quickly learning how to copy many if not all animals and their noises. Eventually even being able to tell what certain

sounds meant. Which were mating calls, which were summons for food, calls of parents, ect. They finally discovered something akin to language.

They started to adopted these sounds into their own behavior as well. They own noises were limited in number and meaning. It only seemed convenient and right to start borrowing those of other species until it felt like their own. They soon found themselves yelp like foxes to get one another attention, growling like wolves when angry, purring like wild cats when happy, and even figuring out ways of combining certain sound of different types of animals to better communicate with one another. Making a language of their own. It was marvelous and led to so much more understanding between themselves. They loved it, finally being able to do more than just rumble in attention, hunger, or satisfaction. They felt so many limits from before leave them.

They were able to make proper plan and even just lounge and communicate for once. Convey emotions without having to rely on just physical gestures. Hannibal and his sister experienced such glee when they realized this they even ‘danced’ in a way. Or what Hannibal would later come to call dancing. It was a lot like what other animals did when they celebrated something. Getting on their hind legs and kinda prancing and jumping around each other excitedly. Clanking and twisting their horns together not in anger but in joy. Hannibal tickling her side with his own dulled tipped horns. That was always fun because she could never retaliate without risking hurint him with her sharper horns so just had to endure until eventually snapping at him with a weak growl between her mimicked whines and rumbles of laughter.

Many years passed like that. Hannibal and his sister having thoroughly established themselves in the top of the food chain of their little home. After a while the two of them no longer growing in body and size and able to appreciate and better understand the current one that was no longer changing. Content to not be able to discovered any new secrets about it.

They had been out swimming one day, just enjoying the weather when they came across they next great discovery. It was a new creature, one that walked on two legs like they often did. It was smaller than them, seemingly pink and fleshy like some animal’s skin they’d seen without fur. It carried some kind of stick with it and had hanging on it’s body that didn’t seem to be part of it’s body but instead was just covering it. Not so odd as many animals used other things to shield their bodies, like snails for example. They’d just never seen such a big animal do it and never something so useless looking. It didn’t even seem hard to protect ones self but maybe it protected in another way they didn’t know for the animal. Either way Hannibal and Mischa were excited and interested to have found something new to explore after years of lack of discovery. It made them feel like little ones again. Always a fun and nostalgic feeling.

They hid themselves quickly. Going underwater and to hide, able to hold their breath for hours with no trouble and staying low as they saw mostly clearly through the water. The sunlight, which by this point in their lives they were used to, shining well enough for them to see through the dark water without being seen.

They watch the new creature as it bent down and took a drink from the water. Ineffectively using it’s bare paw to bring the water to it’s face. Dropping most of it before drinking,

Hannibal wondered why it didn't just move it's face to the water like most animals but eventually figured this way, while ineffective, was safer to pull back from in case it was attacked. He looked at his sister and they shared interested gleams as they kept watching.

They studied that human all day. Watching as it held it's weirdly shaped stick and never let it go no matter where it went. Even when it set up it's odd nest in the woods, starting a fire nearby and eating meat it seemed to carry with it. Pulling from it's weird hangings which Hannibal and his sister now believed was made to keep warm and hold food with. Genuis in their opinion for such a small animal that clearly couldn't eat that much but ate often.

After a while the small creature didn't have much more to show them and Hannibal was quickly getting interested in just trying a taste of it to finish their investigation. Mischa insisted they wait long enough to hear it's call. She wanted to know how it sounds first before eating eat. So, Hannibal waited for his sister curiosity to be sated.

That being said they waited *days* without the creature making any real kind of noise. It seemed to be purposefully quiet. Not from a lack of having ability to make noise, as seeing it fall and call out in pain showed, but that it wasn't making noise on purpose. Probably a safety thing. Hannibal began to think that it wouldn't without running into one of it's own. It also seem to reinforce that when it noticed them watching it. While it couldn't see them it seemed to have that same sense as other prey of being stared at and acted accordingly.

By the third day when they were getting hungry again and still nothing was happening Mischa seemed to be coming around to just eating it like him. But then something interesting happen. The smaller creature ran out of food and Hannibal and his sister got the pleasure of seeing it hunt.

They hadn't known at first that's what it was doing until they realized it was stalking its prey. A rabbit, smaller animal much like what they started off hunting. Too small to sate them now but probably big enough for the creature before them. They watched in fascination as it hid itself and pulled out it's stick. They thought it would throw, hit, or even stab the rabbit with the stick but instead it lined up the stick with the smaller animal and a loud sound like thunder that shook both Hannibal and his sister at the sudden noise was heard. The rabbit splatter red on it's side as it pierced by something. The creature got up proud of itself and collected it's kill. They were vastly more interested now. Even their hunger faded as they enjoyed watching the creature continue to hunt.

It's loud booming stick taking out the small animals with only one or two sounds coming from it. Mischa was practically vibrating with the desire to get a closer look. So after a day of watching the creature hunt they decided to start their own. Attacking the small creature weird portable nest that night and killing it in it's sleep before it could even attack. They dragged it and many of it's things that interested them back to their cave.

Mischa immediately got her hands on the boomy stick and Hannibal was pulling apart their kill. Investigating the new body he's never seen before. Smelling and seeing which parts were most alluring to try first. Finding, wonderfully, that like most animals most parts came in twos or where large enough to share. Hannibal took the heart first, usually the best part, and used his sharp claw to slice it in half. Moving over to his sister who was still handling the

stick curiously and bringing her half. They both took a bite and they cave exploded with pleased noises of all kinds.

They'd never had something so delicious!

Truly the best meat they've ever tasted. A delicacy that excited them for more. They didn't rush through it and allowed themselves to savor every bite as they let out content purrs and played around with the stick together. Enjoying each shared piece. It was when Hannibal was placing another bite in Mischa's mouth that the stick went off again. Something she'd pulled or touched causing it to ring out and thunder even louder in their little cave. Stunning both their ears and striking Hannibal in the chest. The force laying him flat on his back.

Mischa throwing the stick aside and moving quickly over the shocked and rapidly blinking Hannibal. His hand holding over his stunned chest and rubbing as the wind was knocked out of him. They were both relieved to see that it hadn't broken through flesh. He was still in great pain. After ensuring he was okay Mischa moved over to the stick and with a glare and deep growl, she picked it up and easily snapped it in two. Bending and breaking the rest of it for being a threat to her brother.

Afterwards coming over to him to help him sit up and lean against the cave wall. Worried and curious whines coming from her as she nudged his side. Hannibal rubbing his nose between her horns on her forehead to show he was okay now. It just hurt a lot but no real damage.

Those sticks were clearly something to look out for shot they encounter another of these creatures again.

Which they hoped for, even though it was obviously one of the more dangerous to hunt the flavor was certainly worth it to experience again. Hannibal was actually pleased with the idea of the challenge. His attitude must have reflected that because Mischa hissed in fond disappointment at him. Hannibal just chuffed. As if she wasn't just as excited.

It would be a long time after that before they found another of those creatures. Even more surprising was the next time it was a small group of them. Apparently, they weren't solitary animals like Hannibal and his sister expected.

It was about four of them. All with those same sticks and clearly out hunting. Mischa and Hannibal were buzzing with excitement. Mischa especially as she'd finally get to hear the animals call. They decided to study them for a while again. Wanting to see how they interacted in groups. They found animals were very different in the way they act together and apart.

These creatures while serious and quiet when hunting seemed completely different once they'd made their nest all near each other and were making their fires. The first animals Hannibal and Mischa have seen deliberately start fires rather than run from them. They are also the only ones they saw place their food over flame. Hannibal and Mischa don't know how they feel about that but they were aware of how the flames didn't just burn the food like they expected but rather changed it. Darkened the meat and gave it a new smell. It didn't seem worse or better just changed and different. Hannibal was curious to try it when he saw

the satisfaction they had eating it that way. They seem to have no interest in eating it raw and fresh.

He couldn't imagine fire would make it taste so different as to give up eating it the way he did. He made his interest know to his sister to try what they made. Mischa seemed more interested in the creatures themselves than just the rabbits they were eating.

They listened distinctly as the creatures finally started to address one another. They found it fascinating that once they stared they seemed to chatter at one another more than any other animal they've seen besides themselves. Hannibal and Mischa suspected that they had much more complex sounds than other creatures. Every sound they made, while they repeated at times, seemed incredibly unique from the others.

It was impossible to completely copy the noise in the way they did other animals because of how many they just had. They couldn't distinguish as easily what kind of calls they were making. Tone was rather easy to figure out for them. What the creatures growls, purrs, yelps of fear, and emotions were from certain sounds and behaviors but the actual sounds themselves were too unique for such short conversations to give them anything to work with. Mischa seemed determined to try though, if her mimicked muttering was anything to go by.

They waited far into the night before doing anything. Planning to attack when they were all asleep. They found that the animals were very clever in that they always had one awake to watch their surrounds and warn the others when something happens. Like when a bear had come along having smelt their food. They were amazed to see how the clearly weaker creatures worked together to take down the ferocious animal. It made them more excited for their own hunt.

They left them alone for that night. Going back to their cave. Hannibal snagging a piece of their meat before they left. Once they got home Hannibal split it with his sister and they contemplated the taste. It tasted completely different from how they ate rabbit. Not bad but certainly not that much better. It had it's own appeal and Hannibal could see craving it in the future. It made him wonder how other animals may taste after resting over fire.

After eating Mischa began practicing. Copying some of the sounds they heard before. Some of everything. Hannibal did the same and they seemed to agree they got the tone and the realism of it right but their noises meant nothing past their tone. So they'd likely just continue to practice and hunt this ground with their old standby plan.

When in doubt they just went with distress calls for newer animals they were hunting. So, after cultivating the perfect scream of fear they felt confident in their ability to hunt them. They returned the next day and Mischa took the time to learn to copy them even more. Memorizing as much as possible to practice for the next time they encountered the new animals.

The next day the watched them the entire time they moved around their little nests. Waiting impatiently for the sun to finally set and for them to finally begin their hunt. When it started to be sunset, Hannibal and his sister locked eyes and she left his side to seedily make her way over to the other side of the valley. Hannibal waited and watched in anticipation for the creatures to get comfortable into the night.

It was when they all settled down around the fire to eat their last night meal did a piercing scream ring through the trees. The scream Hannibal knew to be his sister. She'd even managed to copy the animals sound for distress perfectly. 'Help!' rang through the air in desperation and intense pain. Had Hannibal not know it was his sister doing it on purpose he may had been jarred and scared for as well.

The male creatures leapt up at the sound of a female of their kind in need. They grabbed their sticks and called out in response to his sister. As they did and started heading her way Hannibal took his chance at well. Letting out a bone shaking wail of his own and desperate plea like his sister did. They turned his way with alarm on their face and urgency in their voices now as they hurried his way to. Seemingly conflicted which way they should go.

His sisters voice got louder and closer heading to the west of the nest. She was circling them by now. Hannibal took it as his cue to move as well. Still wailing occasionally alongside his sister as they circled the clearing and cried for help. The creatures must have suspected something wrong as they got closer and continued on. Now they were all back-to-back in the middle of their nest and pointing their sticks out in fear and alarm at the sounds.

One of the fired when he caught a flash of his sister in the trees still wailing for help. Hannibal didn't bother resisting the angered growl he let out at the assault before shifting it into another wail.

That certainly gave away the fact they were not one of their own in need anymore as the creatures were panicked and shooting off at anything that so much as moved now. Frightened and wide eyes looking into the darkness and already terrified breaths picking up when they caught sight of either of them.

They didn't know what they were saying but they saved every call for later to practice with. At one point Hannibal's leg was hit by one of those sticks and his wail of pain was more genuine and a proper rumble instead of a mimicry. The noise seemed to frighten them more than anything to hear. Hannibal was glad his pain could help for something.

His sister was set off hearing his pain though. No longer having fun knowing he was hurt she was first to charge out. Ramming her horn into the side of the one who shot him before disappearing back into the trees. A roar and hiss leaving her mouth as she did so. The creature falling to the ground and slowly bleeding out when she did. Hannibal heard her his of pain as one of them must have managed to get her as well.

Hannibal certainly wasn't going to allow that to pass. He charged as well. Not being as fast as his sister, he was in clear view of them as he passed by and took a slash from on eof their sides before ramming them so hard it flew into the air. Had they not attacked his sister it's death would have been much faster ad painless.

Next his sister went for their damned sticks and snapped it in two. Hannibal running out a second after her to do the same. Soon all four sticks were destroyed and on the ground before them. A quivering mess of the creatures before them. Their only means of defense gone as they stood before Hannibal and his sister. Mischa let out another wail of distress and plea for help into their faces while Hannibal growled at them.

They may have tried to run but Hannibal couldn't really tell for he and his sister had killed them before they'd managed to take a full step back. Once it was over they looked at one another and reached out. Checking if the other was okay first and foremost before even bother indulging in their kill.

When they were both satisfied the other was fine they sat down and enjoyed their meal.

That would not be the last time they saw such creatures. Far from it in fact. They came with greater frequency as time went on. So much so, Hannibal and Mischa didn't even bother killing every herd that pasted through. They'd never be able to finish all that meat. So for the ones they didn't plan to feast on they observed. They ensured they didn't so much as get close to their home and watched them. They learned more of them and their words and noises. It took years but eventually they began to have some semblance of understanding for their words. Which they rather enjoyed after a while. It gave them an even more elaborate way of communicating with one another.

While speaking more than one of the 'words', as they called the, could be painful to their throats it was still helpful to finally be able to covey simple things clearly. Like saying 'come here', 'I don't like', 'Where is...' or their favorite sound 'I love you.'

Another part of their sounds, language, they enjoyed was the idea of names. Sure other animals sometimes had sounds they used to distinguish members of their group but not to the uniqueness of human, that's what the creatures called themselves, did. It would not be long after understanding this concept that Hannibal's sister would come to him nudging him until she had his attention.

She then pointed to herself and said 'Mischa'. Hannibal had been confused at first. Not recognizing the sound but after a little more of gesturing and Mischa doing her best to explain with their limited vocabulary Hannibal understood it's what she wished to be called from then on. That she wanted a name. She wanted a word that meant just her and that's it.

After Hannibal understood and repeated the name she then wanted to know his new name. Hannibal wouldn't decide on one for months after that. Much to Mischa annoyances. She'd taken to calling him 'you', for everything until he decided. Hannibal will admitted his may have waited telling her his choice a couple weeks longer then needed just because he enjoyed annoying her sometimes. Eventually he'd picked the name 'Hannibal'. He doesn't know why, he just liked the sound. It felt nice on his throat and tongue and pleasant to hear. Unlike Mischa! Which was a nightmare on their throat.

Learning more words also made it easier to hunt the humans. Mischa and Hannibal able to actually call one over calmly and not always have to attract the whole herds attention with distress calls to disorientate them. Sometimes a simple 'come here' or 'I want to show you something' worked better than wailing through the night. Too many herd ran away now when they heard the distress call.

Hannibal and Mischa suspected that the near by main herd of the humans now knew about their attacks and warned one another of their territory. They'd be annoyed by this if it didn't just make the chase all the more fun. They can know it's coming all they wanted, it didn't stop Hannibal and Mischa from eventually catching, killing, and devouring them.

The problem only came when they started avoiding their territory entirely. Mischa and Hannibal having gone on a feeding frenzy at one point and completely devouring every traveling pack that came through for like a full two seasons. They stopped coming all together and Hannibal and Mischa soon found themselves disappointed to not have any of their favorite meat after a while. It got so bad that they had gone off further then ever before in search of the herd. Hoping they hadn't scared them off too far or eaten all the ones in the area.

You can imagine their pleasant surprised when they found the main herd. Not the small hunter groups but the main nest. At least they suspected it to be. They saw many more than before, not just males but females and the offsprings. They had nest build and not from the flimsy garments like their 'clothes' but from proper stones and mud(?). They had to be permanent nest and Hannibal and Mischa had been ecstatic.

Hannibal had thought quickly and stopped his sister from just diving in.

"Careful." He said and she tilted her head. Not understanding why she was stopped.

"Eat much... go further." Hannibal said, meaning that it they suddenly started eating them they were sure to run away further again. Perhaps somewhere they were unwilling to follow. Territory they didn't know and may not be safe. Mischa huffed but nodded.

"...Eat little? They Stay. Eat now." Mischa then asked after a while, salivating as she gazed out at their mean. Hannibal realized a trill of amusement.

"Soon." He responded and moved away. Mischa eventually pulling away and following hesitantly.

They went and made a plan after that. Deciding to only come to that big nest, a village they'd later learn it's name was, occasionally and stick to animals for most meals. They did however spend a lot of their time watching the human main nest. Even more fascinating to see them interacting amongst their own not hunting. They were just such strange and complicated little creatures with many sounds for many things and many behaviors that just didn't fit like other animals.

They were also the very cautious bunch. Weary of everything, even other of their own kind just passing by. It was just so interesting and some of the best entertainment Hannibal and his sister got. They also took the chance to learn their sounds more and more as they came. Copy their ways and their behavior just for the fun of it sometimes. Moving on two legs more and more a copying them and their gestures. It was kinda in their nature to do so, Hannibal's and Mischa's. To copy things. It was how they understood the word around themselves best and understand their prey. They walked like them, talked like them, and ultimately dominated them as a result.

Humans were some of the more fun prey to copy and even taught Hannibal and Mischa more then any other creature they've ever copied before.

It was during one of their copying exercises, they were watching form a distance and copying a pair of human offspring, that something strange happen. It was between one step in the best

when Hannibal felt a shiver over his body. He twitched and shook and his head itched as his sister suddenly stopped and let out a trill of shock and alarm.

Hannibal responded in kind confused. That is until his horns fell right off and in front of him. She let out another squeal of panic and was running frantically around him now. Hannibal claws coming up alarmed. In doing so he saw as they retracted into his hand. He began to shiver again as he shrunk in size and felt something start to grow all over his body. His looked down to see he previous all black and almost leathery skin turning in light brown mostly hairless flesh. Long locks sprouting from his head and hair covering in patches on his body. Like over his penis and under his arms.

Mischa watched horrified as he became more and more like the humans they were observing. Eventually it all stopped and Hannibal looked around at his body and into the dark eyes of his sister where he could see himself reflected in and shuddered a bit as the strange sight. Mischa having calmed and smelling him as if to check by his scent if it was really still him.

"...ugly." He eventually said and Hannibal growled at her as she trilled amused. That is until she started to shiver and her own horns fell off. She looked significantly more alarmed then he did. He watched as she went through the same as he did. Shrinking and changing so completely to match the weak humans below.

She looked at herself horrified and disgusted. Hannibal amusement was more then obvious. He didn't have to call her ugly, he knew she hated the look. After a second of looking at each other Hannibal suddenly shook again and even faster then the previous change he was growing and his horns were coming back. All the hair fell away and he sighed in relief at the feel of being in his proper form.

Mischa looked down at her own body expectantly waiting for it to change. Only five minutes passed before she was whining in distress at nothing happening. She moved forward and pushed at Hannibal's significantly larger chest.

"Fix!" She shouted at him over and over again. Demanding he do something to help her. Hannibal just whined helplessly. It was a good thing that not a moment before she started hyperventilating she was changing again. Growing and shedding hair, black skin returning.

Her relief was tangible. She practically collapsed against Hannibal once she was back. When they were calm again they were able to feel the excitement and happiness from their newest discovery. Who knew that they could copy so perfectly that they could change form?

Now that they knew it wasn't permanent they were excited to try again. They did just that too. As soon as they made it back home to their cave they spent the next three months figuring out how to shift too and from these human forms of theirs. A talent that could not be exaggerated in it's difficulty to do. They had no idea how they managed it the first time with such ease because every time after that was truly one of the most difficult things they'd ever done and only lasted about ten minutes before it fell apart again.

Not that it mattered much, they had no desire to be human longer than that anyways. It was quiet cold in their mostly hairless pink flesh and they now understood why they were always

in those clothes of theirs. The wind could be quiet literally painful after a while even in the cover of their cave.

Still they wanted to get it right. They were so excited to see just what they could do with this ability when it came to hunting. They put their all until into until they perfected being able to hold the look for at least a full hour. That's about the time the strain of doing so became too much. It was still a new skill after all. During the hour it wasn't all that hard to hold but felt more like a constant state of discomfort in ones own skin.

Ultimately it didn't matter though. Hannibal and Mischa were just too proud of themselves for meeting their goal. Dancing in celebration as they always did. Lacking their typical extra appendages to do so they compensated by stamping their feet hard and clanking their hands and fist against their bodies and chest and one another's since they couldn't clank horns. Grabbing one another long wild locks and flinging the strange hair every which way in ana attempt to satisfy their desire to express the wild and pleasant energy they had.

They dull tooth smiles not doing enough to show their elation like their sharp fangs would have. They small little nails not carving into their cave wall or the trees around them like their claws would have. While all of this was true and made their dance not as satisfying it was all fine. If anything it showed how complete their transformation was. It wasn't until they accidentally stepped on and tugged on each others long locks did they finally stop long enough to grab at the throbbing and sensitive scalps that ached at having their hair tugged. Still having each other's hair gripped in hand but being more careful as not to cause more tugging. Hannibal and Mischa being very unfair with the concept of pain being born with such sturdy bodies in their regularly form.

It was a good sign that they couldn't be as careless in these forms as they would have been in their other ones. They made a point of remember that. Afterwards they turned back and headed off to the human village again. Excited to finally execute the plan they'd worked on for all these months while practicing.

Once they arrived it took until sun down to calm themselves and concentrate enough to relax and change form again. They made it just in time for the festivities. The small village below having a 'harvest party' as they called it. Hannibal and Mischa didn't fully understand past the idea that they got together and danced like in their own way like other animals do to celebrate. Only they did it all night long while eating and with their entire herd. They also drunk they strange smelling liquid that wasn't water and seemed to make them lose control in a way. At least that's what it seemed to the siblings. They'd seen many times as the drink lead many humans to enter the woods unattended and sleep like the dead for hours after collapsing just anywhere. What a marvelous substance! It made things so much easier.

They just had the perfect plan. Now that they could turn human Mischa had come up with the idea to present herself as a female ready for mating. Showing her naked body, which they only seemed to show when cleaning themselves or before mating, and provoking the males of the species with their calls.

Hannibal remained himself to prepare for the attack while his sister distract and lured. He watched as she pushed her hair just out of her eyes and let it drag against the forest ground as she walked to the darker edges of the village. She positioned herself on top of a nearby log

and seemed to shuffle a bit as she found the best way to lay back comfortably and presenting. One leg hanging off at the side and the other propped up. Her head titled back to reveal her neck submissively and her eyes showing. One of her breast where bare and the other covered by her long hair. She seemed to struggle with baring her teeth.

The knew humans did it welcomingly but struggled to do the same. Use to baring their teeth in threat and not in welcome. After a while she just stopped and went for lifting her lips without showing teeth. Hannibal nodded as it looked more correct. She seemed to shift nervously as she heard approaching laughter and footsteps. Suddenly nervous at having to perform and act so completely like one of their prey. Never having done more then copy sounds at this point.

She looked into the woods to Hannibal who watched at her and sent sweet wide and proud eyes. Showing her a more child-side to himself to encourage her own. He even bared his razor sharp teeth in humor mimic of the prey they were now hunting. She did the same and the smile she gave was so accurate that Hannibal trilled in encouragement. She shocked herself with it and held the smile in place. Using it while she still had it.

Finally the human males turned the corner and froze at the sight of her. She took a nervous deep breath threw her nose and held the smile. Tilting her head down and batting her lashes like she'd seen other female humans do before. Leaning forward to bare her breast more. She raised a hand and mover her pointer finger back in forth encouraging them to come. When they unfroze and grew wide smile, sharing looks of excitement with one another, she knew she had them.

She giggled and hoped down from her log rushing off into the woods then men chasing behind and calling otu to her. Words she didn't understand. It didn't matter though she knew she had their attention. She kept her pace slow, to a human level but far out paced them. Stopping and turning occasionally.

"Catch me!"

She'd shout to them before rushing off again with more alluring giggles. The drunk men excitedly following after and yelling in teasing tone out to her. None of them noticing how deeply she led them into the woods or the massive and fast figure following at all of there sides. Hannibal easily keeping pace.

When they were far enough they knew they wouldn't be heard she stopped and turned back at them blank faced but an excited and ruthless gleam in her eyes. The men froze as well, they smiles dropping or freezing in place nervously at her sudden demeanor change. Words were given with questioning tones. She didn't bother paying attention to them. Instead locking in on her towering brother behind them. Her face stretched in a natural smile once again, only this time it sent nothing but shivers along the spine of the men that witnessed it.

Fear gripping them as they noticed she was looking pass them and not at them. The moonlight slowly being overcast by something behind them. They turned and screamed in fear at the sight Hannibal before them. Like always most were dispatched easily or crippled. Mischa rushed in the grab one of the two drunks who managed to dodge the grab. Hoping on him in human form and smiling gleefully at him as she always did in a hunt but with human

face for the first time. She leaned down and took a hard bite into his neck. The man twitching and chocking on his own blood as she pulled back and smiled around each chew and bite. Humming in pleasure at the amazing flavor on her human taste buds. So different from usually but equally as amazing in flavor.

Both she and Hannibal so taken with eating they didn't notice as the last drunk managed to run and stumble his way away from them and back into the woods. Tripping and hiding behind a log as he stayed and froze in fear, having to watch the horrifying sight before him as his friends were all eaten alive by a forest and seeming beautiful woman.

He watched as they were torn into. The woman sitting casually naked on the body of friend. Gnawing on flesh shed pulled from his neck before ripping more off and holding it out to the monster before her who sniffed it before taking it with his teeth and eating licking her hand in thanks with a trill. Pulling a sweet and almost innocent giggle from the girl as she leaned up to cuddle his face and nuzzle it against her's before kissing the side of his face. Receiving another lick to her own check again. The sight of that wicked witch and her monster would be burned in his mind forever.

They would not know how horrible of an idea that night was until well afterwards. When the villager would later gather together and would not just bring those hateful and pain causing sticks of there's but fire.

Fire.

They hadn't know how big of a deal it was. Not until it was too late. They hadn't known it was the one way to hurt them even at their fullest power. They didn't know that even if the bullets didn't pierce their skin, even if no type of impact harmed them, even if they were faster and stronger than any human could ever be, fire would always give them the ability to hurt them.

To kill them.

Hannibal lost his sister not even the next summer after that. The over confidence and lack of preparation being their downfall. Had been the reason they weren't ready when his sister was set ablaze, and she screamed for the first time in real pain and wailed as she was burned alive. Hannibal unable to do anything. Having not even been there when they found her. Having gone off, not even for more then an hour. Only rushing back when he heard her calls of pain.

He arrived to see tens on tens of humans surrounding the area dead. They weapons and bodies laying about. He couldn't care less though as in the center of them all was his sister still and motionless, her body a charred mess and only recognizable by her shape and horns. Hannibal was brought the his knees at the sight. He let out a wail so loud the trees around him quiet literally shook. Birds flew off, animals big and small ran for cover and the near by humans.... well... lets just say they had mere seconds to think on their mistake before Hannibal was upon them.

Ripping them to shreds for the first time not for the meat but for the pure pleasure of revenge. He hadn't stopped there, no, he'd run to their little herd, their little *village* , and he'd ripped

apart every single human he came in contact with. No matter it's size, age, gender, he couldn't have cared less in that moment. Too enraged by his loss.

When it was over, when there was nothing left to do. He fell to his knees once again and just cried. He wailed and panted with depletion so strong he thought the pain of the sadness alone would pound his heart through his chest and kill him. He wished for it even so that he might be with his sister again.

Things were rough after that. Hannibal lack any will to live for a long time. He gave up hunting. Unwilling to do it alone with his sister gone. He abandon their cave, unable to handle going there. He slept out in the open valley were she died and laid by her body and protecting it as she decomposed in piece. When the hunger of starving himself and the madness of refusing another creature, even a maggot, to eat her finally got to him he did the unthinkable.

He ate his sister.

Once he was into the fourth bit tears streamed down his face but he could not stop his jaw from moving. The taste was burnt and bitter and by far the worst thing he's ever put in his mouth but he chocked it down. Every single inch of her, he forced into his own body. Even her horns he gnawed and sucked on until they were soft enough to crush with his teeth and swallow. As miserable as it made him it felt... right. It felt like the thing to do. It felt like what he was meant to do. What his kind was meant to do. How they were meant to mourn.

It hurt like Hell, but it left him with such a peace afterwards he could not regret it.

It would be rougher still after that. It would take many winters before Hannibal could even bring himself to do more than eat the first thing in his vicinity when on the verge of starvation. He had no motivation anymore, no drive to do anything. He hated the dull and no longer exciting world that had taken the only thing he learned he truly cared about.

He felt cheated. Beings like them, like his sister, should not have to endure this. Something just spoke inside him that he wasn't meant ot be doing this alone. That he was not meant to be a lone hunter like so many other predators he's seen in nature. It hurt *so* much to do this alone. So much it wasn't worth it anymore. The only thing that kept him going was the many promises he'd made to Mischa to take better care of his health.

All the many instances when they were younger and she scolded him for being reckless. Chastised him for not taking his safety seriously enough and just how mad she'd been the first time he took to long to come home and she feared for his safety. He felt it was a betrayal of all that concern she once gave him to give up entirely. So when things got really bad Hannibal just reminded himself of that and picked himself up just enough to eat.

Weirdly enough it would be the very creatures that took his sister away to bring him enough comfort to once again see the joy in living and discovery.

It was ten years after her death, and Hannibal's endless wandering away from their home, that he heard something he never had before. Something he'd later learn was called music. While he may have not understood every word he heard it for the lamination it was. The mournful

tone it took and the way it expressed pain of loss of a loved one. How it ripped one apart. Hannibal cried again for his sister that day. Pulled from his self destructive hazy as he whimpered.

The musician having stopped playing and calling out to him.

“I take it you’ve lost someone.” He asked at the whimper sympathy in his voice.

Hannibal had looked up at the brave human that seemed unafraid of the monster before it. Seeing it’s clouded eyes and the far off look. He’s seen shut things before. Animals without the ability to see. He hadn’t known some humans had this condition as well. He used it to his advantage.

“Sister.” Was all he managed to rasp out. His monstrous and rough voice being mistake for tears. A hum was heard.

“I’ve lost three myself.” The man said somberly and Hannibal let out a shuddering breath in at the words. It was so painful to just lose one he could not imagine having lost three.

“Every single one hurt just as much as the last and it doesn’t get better with time anyone who says that it a heartless fool.” He said as he strummed the tune of the previous song while speaking. His words did not inspire confidence in Hannibal.

“It doesn’t get easier, but you *do* get used to the feeling. Learn to live with that pain and to see if for the gift that it is. Every day it hurts is a reminder of how amazing a life you led with them when they were still hear. I personally never want to forget that. I want to always remember just how much I loved my siblings and I want it to never be easier living without them. It would be an insult to their memory.” He said and Hannibal gave his own soft but sad hum in agreement.

“Having said that, I know they’d kick my ass from the grave and beyond if I let this misery holding me back form feeling happy again. There are times to be sad and times to put it aside and let yourself be happy. It’s why I give myself this day. This day to grieve the all and to play them these songs to show it. To, hopefully, let them know wherever they are I miss them. When this day ends so will my sadness. At least for one more year it will stop long enough for me to enjoy the life I have and then I will stop once again and allow myself a day of mourning.” He said as he strummed his lyre. Falling back into singing again absently as tears fell from his faded grey eyes.

“Can I mourn with you?” Hannibal asked only after long moments of processing the meaning of his words and struggling to form a proper response.

“Aye, I never turn anyone away.” He said and went right back to singing Hannibal taking his seat and listening.

He listened all that day. He felt his pain to the fullest and he let it wash over him. He whined and whimpered and moaned and cried, and even joined in on the song at one point. Then in the morning, he picked himself up he looked straight forward at the word and he took that misery and put it aside.

He could wait a year to feel it again.

Hannibal was able to get on with his life after meeting that strange human. A man that had given him such insight Hannibal saw fit not to eat him. He left before the man woke and he lived by that rule for years. Living life and seeking joy and new experiences as he always has with his sister in the past and then once a year he'd allow himself to mourn. Everyday, the same day of the year she'd died, he closed himself off and he expressed him pain properly.

As time went on and he eventually found himself learning new things, and even eventually abandoning in home in the woods for a safer and more convenient life among humans, and choosing to express that pain not just through song but any form of art once year. Rather through sculpture, painting, or even things such as murder. All works of art dedicated to his sister on that day.

The desire for new ways to honor and do so properly is a major part of why he joined up with humans. Looking for more ideas when the old ones didn't help as much as before. His time learning among them showed him there was more and more to appreciate about these creatures and the way they chose to live life. While he'd never stop hunting them or ever truly forgive them he could find purpose living among them.

Outside of art Hannibal discovered his true passion among them, cooking. The things they do and add to meat to truly draw out all manner of flavor from it tickles something in Hannibal instinctive brain that soak to eat and devour all that existed in the world. No longer able to hunt new animals to eat, having tried damn near everything and nothing better than human flesh he turned to cooking to find new and inventive flavors that meat held within itself.

It began his new passion. His new drive in life. It was enough to push him onward and make him content in life. It was enough to help him move on to seek more and more. To learn, to better himself, to interact with others again even if they could never understand him the same way his sister once did. It was enough to get him through centuries, and centuries of living in this world where he wasn't even blessed with the same gift of aging that promised an end to his life once he had no more flavors to discover, to push him onward.

It was enough *until* the day Hannibal meets one Will Graham. A beautiful, intelligent, and potentially ruthless Wendigo that seems to have no idea what he is.

End Notes

Comments are love!

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